



SASC NEWS

The Newsletter of the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club



April 2007

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Cover:

Very Tasty (Chris Sligar) running before a fresh breeze in a flurry of foam to win the Club Championship and the Kelly Cup on Saturday 31 March

(Photo Tanya McCutchan)

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COMING EVENTS

April 2007

SATURDAY 5 MAY 2007

First race in the Winter Series

SUNDAY 6 MAY 2007

Ranger World Championships

SATURDAY 19 MAY 2007

Second race in the Winter Series

SATURDAY 2 JUNE 2007

Third race in the Winter Series

SATURDAY 16 JUNE 2007

Combined SASC/RSYS/RANSA club race

SATURDAY 23 JUNE 2007

Fourth race in the Winter Series

SATURDAY 30 JUNE 2007

Annual Prizegiving at the Club

SATURDAY 7 JULY 2007

Fifth race in the Winter Series

SATURDAY 21 JULY 2007

Sixth and last race in the Winter Series

TENDER!

**Call Mike or
Allan on
0418 678 690**

Sat: 0900-1800
Sun: 0900-1700



GENERAL MEETING

**NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN THAT THERE WILL BE A
GENERAL MEETING ON WEDNESDAY 16 MAY 2007 AT 2000
AT THE CLUBHOUSE, 1 GREEN STREET, CREMORNE NSW**

At the meeting the members will be asked to consider and approve the subscriptions for the following year. The Board proposes and recommends the following fees for 2007/2008:

Joining Fee	\$500
<i>Subscriptions</i>	
Ordinary	\$425
Absentee/Country	\$207
Associate	\$160
Intermediate	\$54
Junior	\$38

P Chapman
Honorary Secretary

SIGNALS FROM THE COMMODORE

As the vintage 2006-07 season draws to a close I would like to congratulate Chris Sligar, owner of *Very Tasty*, as winner of the Club Championship and the Kelly Cup and also to congratulate all the divisional winners and place getters.

Like a good wine vintage a lot goes into making a good sailing season. Like a good wine we need the right weather which in our case is a good nor-easter and this year it seemed to be nearly every race that we had our 10 to 15 knots. We need the raw material, in our case the competitors and this year we again excelled breaking the 100 starters for the first time in at least 30 years. To produce a good wine you then need a great vigneron. To have a great sailing season we need a great race team and that we had. For this our thanks must go to Maggie, Guy and the divisional representatives for the organisation on land and Russ, John and Charles with all their start team helpers on the water.

So enjoy your brief break with a few good reds and get the boat ready for the winter season.

One of the people who have made Sydney Amateurs such an enjoyable experience for so many over the last few years has been Patrick Munn. Patrick has been part of the scene for the last eight years, running the office for the last three of them but has now decided to see a bit more of the world with his wife and then retire to Bowral. We all wish him well and look forward to hearing of his travels. Megan Keogh, previously working Monday and Tuesday, will take over the running of the office.

And finally I would like you all to give some thought to the type of organisation you would like to have representing your Club and let us know what you think. Yachting NSW was originally formed by the sailing clubs of NSW to represent their interests at State and National levels. Some people feel that YA NSW has moved away from its traditional role and cite the recent advertisement for a Corporate Relations Manager as evidence that it may be moving in a different direction from supporting the amateur sport we all enjoy. What do you think?

Rob Evans



BIG DAY OUT

April 2007

Saturday 17 February was pretty busy on the harbour, particularly so for those participating in the Club's racing programme. As well as the usual Super 30s, Cavalier 28s, Division 2, Classic Divisions and the OK Dinghys the Club conducted the first heat of the Young 88 Regatta.

There were 77 starters in all, including 13 Young 88s. The remaining heats of the very successful Young 88 Regatta were sailed on Sunday 18 February.

There was also a birthday celebration in *Captain Amora* for some of the crew. Starter Russ Chapman and assistants Vic Dibben and Cameron Edwards were all born on 16 February.

Russ is a life member who joined the club in 1972. Vic is an honorary life member and past Commodore who held the position of Saturday starter before handing the job to Russ in 2001. Vic has held every position in the Club at one time or other including that of Commodore on two occasions, from 1979 to 1982 and again in 1985-86. He joined the Club in 1973 when he sailed his Daydream sloop *Salamander* in the Saturday pointscore competition along with Russ in his Daydream *Aquarius*.

Russ originally sailed a Colleen-class sloop *Spectre* and moved on to sail *Aquarius*, an S80 *Hot Shot* and is currently co-owner of an Adams 10, also named *Spectre*, with son Peter, the Club's honorary secretary. Along the way he collected seven gold medals and was winner of the Kelly Cup twice, once on the centenary of this trophy.

Vic has had a long history competing in the Saturday competition finishing with the Stella-folkboat *Stella Clair*.

Cameron who recently joined the Saturday race management team, is a student at Pittwater High School, and by the time you read this, will be driving — carefully — with newly acquired P plates, a bonus of becoming 17.

Truly a big day out.

Tony Barry

Russ Chapman,
Vic Dibben and
Cameron Ed-
wards in *Captain
Amora*





The SASC conducted a regatta for Young 88s and Super 30s over the weekend of 17 and 18 February. On the Sunday four windward-leeward races were completed in slightly-tricky easterly conditions but good competition was enjoyed by everyone, despite having to compete for space on the harbour with boats in other events — including Farr 40s.

And there is, actually, a rounding mark in the photo below

John Jeremy photos



FROM THE BOATSHED

April 2007

by
John Crawford

Tomorrow morning I fly to Tasmania to rescue *Vanity* from Port Huon and sail her back to Sydney in company with *Mahuka*. By the time you read this *Vanity* should be on her mooring in Mosman's Bay and looking forward to the Winter Season. I will be recording some of the highlights of *Vanity's* cruise to Tasmania in a later issue of the *SASC News*, but for now I'm still missing not having a boat in the bay. *Lahara*, (Mike Warner), who accompanied *Vanity* across Bass Strait in February is already back from her great adventure.

I never quite realised how addictive sailing, racing and just being at the Sydney Amateurs was, until I walked down the hill to the club and saw *Vanity's* mooring buoy bobbing in the water attached to nothing. An empty feeling, I hate to suggest it, but it's almost like losing a partner.

I had some generous offers to sail with others on their boats, while I was 'boatless', but its not quite the same and although it may sound funny the 'boatless' state leaves you thinking you are missing some vital organ. Sailing for me is a wonderful security blanket. It takes you away from your troubles, it requires your undivided attention, skills and experience and it is very different from most of our other daily activities. It brings us all directly in contact with the elements, which can never be ignored and are magnified once you are on the water.

Added to this is that magical place we all love, the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club. Talk about fantasy-land. Quaint buildings and the oddest assortment of eclectic individuals you will ever find in one place making up a dysfunctional family that somehow is held together by 'Amateurs Glue'. I am convinced that in spite of our individual differences Amateurs Glue is totally addictive and one small whiff brings us together instantly and harmoniously. I love it and so do you.



Vanity in
Wineglass Bay,
Tasmania
(Liam Timms photo)

THE GLORY OF TIMBER

David Salter reports from the recent Wooden Boat festival in Hobart

There is a special magic to wood. Nature's finest building material is infinite in its variety and has limitless applications. It made seafaring possible — from elegant Viking longboats and sturdy British men o' war to the most unassuming Cape Cod fishing smack or the Halvorsen brothers' splendid sequence of offshore racing yachts. The look, feel and durability of a wooden boat are uniquely pleasing. They speak not just of the substance from which they're made but about the people and times that created them. The best a steel or fiberglass boat can raise in most owners is a restrained sense of pride. Wooden yachts inspire true love.

No part of Australia is more strongly identified with the traditions of timber boatbuilding than Tasmania, so it was little wonder that dockside conversation at the recent Wooden Boat Festival in Hobart tended towards the sentimental. More than 40,000 visitors and participants spent four memorable days in homage to things that float made of timber. Not all these boats were genuinely beautiful, but every last one had that indefinable quality of *character*. No two were alike, yet together they made a profound statement about the wonderful power of well-made, practical objects. Each expressed an individual notion of beauty or usefulness. Human hands had shaped them from a natural, living material. To wander among those 400 creations was to pay homage to the miraculous strengths of wood, and the glory of its gift.

More than 40,000 spectators attended the 4-day festival in Hobart

All photos by David Salter



Pictures struggle to convey the real atmosphere. The prevailing colours were the gleaming white of topsides, the richly varnished hues of timber coach-houses and cabin tops and that distinctive soft beige of weathered teak. The whole scene was topped off by the vivid flapping rainbow of a thousand “dress ship” flags and bunting. The overall effect was one of contended gaiety rather than mere spectacle: people were there to commune with the whole spirit of wooden boatbuilding rather than just gawk at individual craft.

But leisured inspection and admiration were certainly the order of the day. A constant stream of enthusiasts shuffled along the docks in a form of reverse *concourse d’elegance*. The SASC register was well represented. Sean Langman’s giant-killing *Maluka* only needed to make the short trip around the D’Entrecasteaux from her berth at Port Huon. *Fidelis* had also rested up there after the Sydney-Hobart and owner Nigel Stoke took the opportunity to have a few days of relaxed cruising with friends before the festival. Vice-Commodore John Crawford bravely sailed his 24-foot gaff-rigged Ranger *Vanity* down from the SASC, and I had the pleasure of crewing for part of that delivery. *Lahara*, looking splendidly spruced up, also made the long journey south from Mosman Bay. At least a quarter of all the boats on display had come from beyond Tasmania, a commitment of time and expense that was deeply appreciated by the locals.

The normal antipathy between power and sail evaporated in a shared affection for wooden boats. There was a warm mood of mutual ad-

A long-distance lunch at Ranger alley on *Maluka* and *Vanity*



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miration and common pride in the role of custodianship. Owners of majestic 80-foot motor yachts mixed happily with the proud builders of 8-foot rowing punts. Indeed, it was the yachting fraternity who seemed most interested in the elegant late-19th century steam launches, while the hot-water boys were fascinated by the intricacies of gaff rigging. Perhaps the most generally admired style of craft was the tough little cray fishing boats that have worked the Tasmanian coastline for more than a century. Everyone was captivated by their almost plumb bows, sweet sheer lines, solid wheel-houses and graceful, sea-kindly canoe sterns. They were boats built to survive any weather, and more than one yacht owner was heard to say, “Gee, I’d really love to have one of *those*, just to putter about in.”

Constitution Dock was crammed gunnel-to-gunnel, mainly with the smaller craft (a reminder of the Sydney-Hobart glory days when the whole fleet used to raft up there, three deep). Across the Franklin Wharf the more modern pontoons of King’s Pier marina offered an extraordinary variety of boats stretching from 1873 to the present day. In the background, the towering profiles of the HM Bark *Endeavour*, *Enterprise* and *Duyfken* replicas, their presence a heartening reminder of the role wood has played in our history.

Owners, guests and crew dawdled from boat to boat reciprocating hospitality and swapping yarns. The evocative vernacular names of favourite shipbuilding timbers reverberated in a thousand cockpit conversations. King Billy, blue gum, stringy bark, celery top, teak,

Power and sail
lived together in
harmony at King’s
Pier marina



Tassie oak, mahogany, kauri, jarra, oregon, and the monarch of them all – huon pine. The boats, too, all had proper nautical monikers, not some mangled amalgam of a sponsor’s product or brand name. *Zephyr*, *Erin Lass*, *Clara*, *Windhover*, *Ibis*, *Aotea*, *Avon*, *Elf*, *Valkyria*, *Olive May*, *Soliloquy*, *Casilda*, *Leah-Sophie*. It’s difficult to imagine any boat with those names not being easy on the eye and rich in folklore.

Perhaps the most eye-catching of the larger yachts was *Storm Bay*, a superbly restored 54-foot cutter-rigged gaff fishing smack, originally built by Percy Coverdale at his yard on Battery Point in 1925. (This was the boat that inspired the celebrated ocean racer *Winston Churchill*.) Current owner Tim Phillips of Victoria has spent 10 years reviving *Storm Bay* and enjoyed the fruits of his long labours during an unhurried delivery cruise to Hobart. The powered boats offered a captivating range of extremes: everything from delightful steam-powered skiffs and larrikin plywood speedboats to *Preana*, a long, low-profile and luxurious motor yacht built in 1896 for a Hobart businessman. He liked to travel to work in it each day, streaking up and down the Derwent at 12 knots.

The festival opened with a massive Parade of Sail that attracted huge media attention and climaxed with two deafening broadsides fired from *Endeavour* while she was still under sail. Dockside activity included a lighthearted competition between teams of senior high school students who — from absolute scratch — had to build, decorate and sail a small open boat in three days. And everywhere we looked there was that wonderful, warming sight of wood. Decks, topsides, spars, Samson posts, coach-houses, coamings, oars, wheels and tillers. The craftsmen who fashioned these beautiful things have left us a legacy beyond value.

Restored 54-foot gaff cutter Storm Bay was the star of the 2007 fleet



SUN SETS ON TWILIGHT SERIES

The last Friday twilight race of the season on 23 March was sailed in a perfect north-easterly breeze and balmy conditions as a farewell to daylight saving for another six months.

The race was not entirely without incident. Just as the first boats were rounding the Point Piper mark and heading towards the finish in Athol Bight the buoy marking the end of the finish line started to take off towards Garden Island. The first yachts could see the line getting longer and faced a puzzle deciding whether to follow the buoy (the near end of the line) or aim for *Captain Amora*. The challenge grew further when *Captain Amora* suddenly got under way and started chasing the wayward mark at high speed (it was subsequently revealed that a splice on the anchor line had failed).

Orient Express and *Mezzaluna* were finished by remote control from *Captain Amora* during the recovery operation. ‘We were bemused’, commented Peter Horn who had the sponsor’s representatives on board *Mezzaluna* for the evening. The thoughts of the remaining skippers are not recorded — perhaps they were too far away to observe the rapid reinstatement of the finishing line before they got there. However they may have later detected a warm glow of satisfaction in the starting team as a result of a manoeuvre well executed (in their opinion, at least).

The barbeque at the Club after the race was very well attended. Perhaps all were hoping to win the trip for two to Lord Howe Island sponsored by Concise Systems. Of course there can only be one winner, and that was Tony Saunders in *Rapier*. Concise Systems have generously sponsored the prize for several years now and all participants are very appreciative of their support.

John Jeremy photo

Yachts manoeuvring before the start of the twilight race on 23 February as the RAN's new tanker HMAS *Sirius* arrives in Sydney for her first visit



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MAN OVERBOARD!

by
Peter
McCorquodale

Another typical Summer Saturday afternoon on Sydney Harbour. Three of us on *Celeste* — the Commodore, Treena and me, heading upwind to Shark Island, with lots of yachts under spinnaker coming down towards us. It's blowing 15 to 20 knots, and we're on port, of course, and after bearing away behind a starboard tacker we are confronted by a rather large MHYC yacht, out of control going sideways, spinnaker flying to leeward, pole in the air, crew racing around.

Unable to stifle a wry grin, I then suddenly notice that about 20 metres behind them, in the water, is what appears to be one of their crewmembers. I immediately fire the genoa halyard and Rob brings *Celeste* up into the wind and right beside the soggy crewmember. As we approached I noticed him rubbing the back of his head — he appeared to be in some pain. Treena and I grabbed him, and fairly easily pulled him aboard — the advantage of *Celeste's* low freeboard.

Once he was aboard, with a rather large lump on the back of his head, he explained he had been knocked overboard off the foredeck by the pole, during a gybe I assume, and had hit the water, but had then come up rather hard under the boat, hitting his head.

As he pulled off his sodden t-shirt and put on a dry wet-weather jacket we watched as his crewmates attempted to recover the spinnaker, which was by now in the water. It was ten minutes before *Forty Two* comes up beside us. We have dropped the main and are under power, but they still have the main up. As they come past their skipper yells at his lost crewmember to jump in the water and swim over, and they will recover him. Both Rob and I immediately reply that there is no \$#%ing way we are allowing a man who has been hit on the head and has already been in the water for a few minutes to get back into the Harbour! We subtly suggested that perhaps they should drop their sails and we would come alongside them to drop off their crewmember.

And so they did, we transferred our stowaway back to his rightful ship, motored back to where we first stopped racing, hoisted the sails, and recommenced racing.

I will not go into the decision to hoist the masthead spinnaker on the leg to the Neutral Bay mark, as that is best left unsaid.

So another typical Summer Saturday afternoon on Sydney Harbour. A copybook execution of a man-overboard rescue, a reminder of how easy it is for things to go wrong, and of the importance of basic seamanship.



AUDI SYDNEY HARBOUR REGATTA 2007

April 2007



The SASC conducted the racing on Course D for the 2007 Audi Sydney harbour Regatta. The Classic Division and PHS 3 and 4 Divisions enjoyed fine sailing on the first day in a fresh north easterly. The crew of *Antara* was intent on the finish in the first race (above) and *Bar-celona* overtook *Clew-less?* just before the finish (below)

All photos by John Jeremy





The brisk conditions on Day 1 were a challenge for some — *Gingerbread Man* had some spinnaker problems (above)

The wind was almost non-existent on the second day although one race was started on Course D. The conditions were even more challenging as the wind died to a zephyr (below)





Gingerbread Man was one of the few boats to finish on Day 2, creeping across the finish line in almost no wind (above). Others, like *When the Fat lady Sings* (below) were less lucky, arriving after the time limit had expired



CLIPPER ROUND THE WORLD RACE

Race 7 — Victoria to Panama

by

Richard Falk

The break in Victoria allowed us all to “recharge our batteries”. Some of us (me included) were pretty run down after a month in freezing temperatures and the physical battering that we sustained across the North Pacific. In addition the boat had also copped a bit of a beating and a few days of repair work was needed across a variety of areas. We were also excited about the prospect of racing with virtually a full crew for only the second time since the event had started almost nine months earlier.

The forecast for race day was for very-light winds so the decision was made to motor down the Juan de Fuca Straits, some 60 miles of picturesque but very tidal waterway that leads to the Eastern Pacific. Once out in the open ocean we organised a Le Mans-style start and were off racing.

In a start that seemed to have become customary for us aboard *Singapore* we found ourselves again mid fleet in the hours after the start. The fleet very quickly split with half the boats opting to fly spinnakers in the NW breeze and the other half opting to go for some more westing whilst flying white sails. This trend continued for the first two days with two boats that had gone west electing to cut back in towards the coast. Two others, *Jersey* and *Cardiff* took the decision to go almost due west to pick up what they perceived to be more favourable winds.

Floating homes in
Victoria Harbour

(All photos courtesy
Richard Falk)



Aboard *Singapore* we had made our decision early and stuck to our game plan. We headed SW and positioned ourselves about 80 to 100 miles off the west coast of Washington State and then Oregon as we made our way towards Panama. The first two days saw the wind becoming a little fickle with fortunes changing frequently. Gradually the wind began to do as it was forecast and filled in a little from the North West. Having elected to stay well off the coast we enjoyed a lovely advantage over the bulk of the fleet and moved to the lead. Behind and to the west of us *Cardiff* and *Jersey* continued to head further west to try and make even better use of the same system we were in. This strategy was to prove to be their undoing.

Further inshore the other seven boats of the fleet were duelling with one another and contending with winds that were a little

more fickle being on the eastern edge of the high-pressure system and partially under the influence of the land mass of North America. As the days wore on the forecast was still showing better breeze further offshore and so we continued our track some 80 miles off the coast. Meanwhile, after noticing a drop in speed *New York Clipper* hove-to to investigate only to discover a palm tree firmly lodged against their keel. A bit of huffing and puffing and some careful placement of heaving lines and they managed to free themselves. At least the palm tree was a sign that we were heading for warmer waters — a nice change from the North Pacific on our previous leg.

At this stage the fleet had split into three groups: *Cardiff* and *Jersey* well to the west of us and astern, ourselves on *Singapore Clipper* about 80 miles offshore and still in the lead and then the rest of the fleet inshore and between 20 and 50 miles behind us.

We enjoyed some lovely reaching and running conditions as we headed further south. The pleasure of cruising under kite for days on end gradually reduced as the wind increased. By the time we were level with San Francisco the wind had freshened considerably and we were under white sails again in 45 knots of true wind from the North West. We made great headway at speeds of up to 16 knots.

All was going well until we seemed to lose some boat speed. That nagging feeling crept in that we should be going a knot or two faster than we actually were. Invariably when I had held this suspicion before but not acted on it we found later that we had been towing a rope, a net or some other piece of flotsam. So with great fear of losing our hard-fought lead against the fleet I made the decision that it was time for a quick swim to check out our keel and rudder for unwanted hitchhikers.

Normally this would be done in a fairly simple manner with the boat being hove to and me diving over the side for a quick look see. However, running at around 14 or 15 knots in 45 knots true made life a little interesting. Just getting the boat hove to was a challenge. When we finally had the boat as settled a she was going to get we discovered we were still doing 4 knots through the water. So with a harness on and a line attached to the boat, over I went! I very quickly realised that I was doing an impersonation of a James Bond stunt double. However, despite the threat of drowning, being eaten by a shark or being knocked out by the pounding of a 30 tonne boat in 3 metre seas my biggest challenge proved to be keeping my swimmers on as I was towed at speed underwater. Fortunately the crutch strap of my harness took care of that for me and my dignity was maintained. A quick inspection (and I mean quick) established that we were not dragging any debris and I was dragged back on board.

Interestingly enough at the beginning of the race when I asked for volunteers to act as divers and rescue swimmers for the duration I had

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no takers. This despite the fact that James Lim (one of our RTWs) had set the record for being the first person to swim from Singapore to Indonesia, was a former commando and was also adamant that sharks do not eat Chinamen! Chris Oh is this true???? Was there interest shown by any sharks the day you threw your toe overboard?

We were soon off again and re-trimmed for maximum speed. With still the best part of 2,000 miles to go we were still in a commanding position with a small margin over *Durban* who were perhaps 30 miles astern of us and coming out onto our line. It was about this time that we became aware of the first of a series of TRSs (Tropical Revolving Storms) sitting in our path off the coast of Mexico. Alita was in her infancy and was stationary as she built in strength. Forecasters were being very cagey and did not appear to have any idea of which way she would turn. As is often the case the areas surrounding the TRS were somewhat bereft of wind and we were left with little option as to how to tackle her. With a very large wind hole for at least a week to the south of Alita and a tight timeframe for the subsequent race legs from here to Liverpool I felt it was likely that the race would be shortened to a set of “gates” that had been inserted for such an eventuality on the southern end of the Gulf of California. We took the chance and continued with our lead but now slightly closing the coast to bring us to the closest end of the anticipated finish line.

The victorious crew of *Singapore* after crossing the finish



Finally word came through from the race office informing us that the race would indeed be shortened to the line we had anticipated. With only a few hundred miles to go, a 30 mile lead over the boat in second place and a dying breeze our confidence grew and we began at last to get excited about the prospect of our first win.

Ten hours from the finish we discovered that *Durban* had closed to within 20 miles of us and the wind continued to ease. The last seven or eight hours of the race proved to be a drift with us focusing every bit of effort on helming and trimming to maintain our lead. We were justifiably somewhat jittery as we played a game of cat and mouse against an unseen opponent. We finally crossed the line in the early hours of the morning just after sunrise. At this stage we were still uncertain as to *Durban's* exact location. About an hour later we discovered that they had crossed a mere 50-odd minutes after us.

Needless to say we were very excited. The crew was over the moon that we had finally managed a podium position and in particular a first place. Phone calls started coming thick and fast to congratulate us. Sponsors, Singapore media and various hangers on all wanted a piece of us. I have never learned the lesson so clearly that everyone loves a winner. One of our crew suddenly looked quite despondent after we had crossed the finish line. When quizzed as to why the long face his response was that with the winning pennant we would receive we now had "yet another" piece of kit to rig with our sponsors flags whenever we arrived in port. There is no pleasing some people!

The crew celebrated our success by throwing me in the water. At this stage we were 20 miles off the coast of Mexico. Twenty minutes after I climbed back on board a rather large and curious shark made its presence known by buzzing the stern of the boat for an hour or two. Timing is everything!

We were now faced with a 1,000 mile motor down the coast of Mexico and towards the Panama Canal. By this stage TRS Alita had dissipated but the subsequent wind hole stretched many hundreds of miles. We took advantage of the five days or so of motoring to catch up on onboard maintenance, sleep and general relaxation.

Due to the distance we were required to motor we needed an unscheduled fuel stop in Mexico. The port chosen was Huatulco, a small resort town a little south of Acapulco. Our stop was brief — only two hours. In company with *Victoria Clipper* and *Durban Clipper* we managed to get in, clear customs and immigration, refuel, buy some fresh produce, sample some local brews, meet some locals, clear out through customs and be on our way in just over two hours. We even managed a swim in the picturesque bay before heading off. The Mexican coast looked beautiful and is definitely worthy of some extended cruising when next I pass by.

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Eventually we arrived in Panama and berthed at the Flamingo Island marina a short distance from Bilboa and Panama City. We stepped onto the refuelling dock to the applause of the locals and the various Clipper race team that was waiting for us and were showered in the customary spray of champagne and beer. It was one time I was perfectly happy to waste a bit of Dom Perignon.

Having caught up on most of our maintenance on the way down the Mexican coast we were able to take a day off to look around Panama city. It was an interesting experience. As was the case in many of the places we had visited the extremes of poverty and wealth in close proximity were very evident. The area was rich in history with influences from the Spanish and French very evident. The strong presence of firearms and obvious poverty in many areas was a warning to all to be wary of where we went and not to travel alone. There were particular areas where you simply would not have made it through unscathed. When you drive past a police station in one of the “less salubrious” areas and its entrance is guarded by four policemen in full body armour behind sandbags and a mounted machine gun there is a lesson to be learned. In some areas where locals had literally ripped walls down and strewn bricks and other rubble across the roads it was enough to make you a little nervous even in a taxi in transit. However, it was an interesting and friendly place and no-one associated with the race had any problems there.

The streets of
Panama City



Our prize giving night came and went and a very large party was had by all — none more so than the crew of *Uniquely Singapore*. The next morning saw us depart the marina and start our journey through the Panama Canal — a real experience to remember, despite the fact that it was started with a rather nasty rum hangover!

Read next instalment for that great adventure!

Richard Falk
Uniquely Singapore

THE SHB 75 REGATTA

April 2007

On Sunday 18 March the weather might have been grey but thousands of Sydneysiders turned out, nonetheless, to celebrate the 75th Anniversary of the opening of the Sydney Harbour Bridge. As part of the on-water celebrations, the Sydney Amateur Sailing Club, on behalf of the NSW Premiers Department, Office of Protocol and Special Events, conducted a regatta for classic and gaff-rigged yachts. Despite the short notice some fifty boats entered the regatta although only about forty were finally able to start — some were delayed by traffic both ashore and on the water.

The event was planned to provide a spectacle with yachts rounding Fort Denison before finishing the final leg at a finish line laid to the west of Fort Denison, as near as possible to the bridge without encroaching too much on the shipping lanes.

The race was started in ‘Gaffer’s Day style’ (each boat was allocated a start time) north east of Clark Island in a fading breeze — a real test for the handicapper. It was clear that it would not be possible to sail the complete course and starters in *Captain Amora* decided to shorten the course at the first rounding of the Fort Denison mark. Anchoring in a harbour location where we would not usually be allowed to even consider a finish line was interesting and a bit uncomfortable. If you think Bradleys head waters are a washing machine, try anchoring west of Fort Denison!

Despite the shortened course, many boats finished close together providing a fine spectacle for those who cared to watch. An out-going 105,000 dwt tanker, an incoming container ship and a multitude of ferries added to the interest on the day. There were no incidents, however, and the celebration and prize giving at the Club afterwards was a great success, helped along by free food and drink and very generous prizes.

The winners were *Reverie* in the Spinnaker Division, the 6 metre *Sjo Ro* in Non-spinnaker Division A, the 1890s gaff cutter *Jenny Wren* in Non-spinnaker Division B and *Australia IV* in the Historic Skiffs Division. Full results are at www.sasc.com.au.

The SASC thanks the Premier’s Department, NSW Maritime and the sponsors Little Creatures Brewing and Swings & Roundabouts for their support and assistance.

John Jeremy



SHB 75 REGATTA



As celebrations got underway on the bridge, a parade of ships led by MV *Texas* made their way under the bridge with a parasail Australian flag adding colour on a grey day (above)

Wathara, *Anitra V* and *Sana* crossing the regatta start line near Clark Island in light conditions (below)

All photos by John Jeremy





Captain Amora on station for the finish west of Fort Denison (above)
Jenny Wren had the finish line all to herself as she won her division (below)
Caprice of Huon, Theme, Ranger and *Anonyma II* finishing (next page)







In the words of her Pilot, a 'cast of thousands' greeted the Cunard liner *Queen Mary 2* when she arrived in Sydney for the first time at dawn on 20 February. Despite the unexpected number of boats, all went well as the impressive ship berthed at Fleet Base East (above)

In anticipation of a similar crush on the water when *Queen Elizabeth 2* arrived later the same day (below), the scheduled twilight race in the Paul Slocombe Trophy series was cancelled and two short windward-leeward races were sailed the following week. They were so successful they might be included in the programme again next year

John Jeremy photos



James Craig Sails Again

The Sydney Heritage Fleet has announced the screening of a new documentary covering the discovery, salvage, retrieval and restoration of the 19th Century square-rigger, *James Craig*, and her return to operational sailing — a feat acknowledged around the world.

Members of the public are invited to attend screenings in the ANZ Theatre at the Australian National Maritime Museum at:

**3.00 pm or 6.30 pm on Saturday 19 May 2007 or
10.00 am or 12 noon on Sunday 20 May 2007**

Tickets are \$15 and those attending are invited to tour *James Craig* after the session at no extra charge.

Bookings are essential and can be made by calling **(02) 9298 3888** or by email to: bclayton@sydneyheritagefleet.com.au

Copies of the documentary, on DVD or videotape, will be available for purchase.



SASC ANNUAL PRIZEGIVING

The annual prizegiving will be held at the SASC Clubhouse
Green Street, Cremorne on

Saturday 30 June 2007

The prizegiving will commence at 1200 sharp and will be
followed by a 'happy hour' and lunch

Cost \$40.00 per head (incl. GST)

Put the date in your diary now!

**Bookings essential — please telephone Megan Keogh on
9953 1433 no later than Friday 15 June 2007**

NEW MEMBERS

April 2007

We welcome the following new members:

Tom Bomford
Michael Evans
Graeme Heckenberg
Michael Jansen
Paul Patos
Michael Stevens

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir,

Our long-time honorary life member J. A. (Jim) Middleton has been in the Sanatorium at Wahroonga recovering from a broken hip. Jim was for many years our honorary secretary and also a valued crew member in Bill Merrington's *Eventide*.

In 1972 the Club's 100-year history book *The Amateurs* was published. This marvellous record was compiled by Jim — an enormous task. In the early 1960s the SASC acquired the present Clubhouse and among many things accomplished by Jim, the erection of the steel beam to stabilise the structure was paramount. I am sure all members will wish him a speedy recovery.

Southerly

Dear Sir,

Vice Commodore Crawford sailed his Ranger-type boat *Vanity* to Hobart to take part in the Wooden Boat Festival. The trip was done in stages with Liam Timms and Peter McCorquodale crewing at times. I consider this to be an epic voyage in such a tiny boat and I sincerely congratulate John on this feat.

John's glamorous daughter Holly took part in the FIS World Cup snowboard halfpipe event at Furano in Japan winning on 18 February. This was Holly's first World Cup win and she now ranks as No. 1 in the world in this sport. There is no doubt that all SASC members are thrilled and proud of this historic victory.

Southerly

NEWSLETTER DEADLINE

The next SASC News will be the June 2007 edition. Contributions from members, which are always welcome, should reach the editor by Friday 25 May 2007. Contributions can be in hard copy or sent by email. Photographs are also very welcome.



The following article was published in The Australian Motor Boat and Yachting Monthly of 5 April 1931. Even today, members might like to adopt it as advice for their crew.

Letters from a Self-made Yachtsman to His Boys

No. 40

By E. G. Ulm

The lad who takes up the game of sailing as his hobby has much enjoyment before him. He must play the game fairly and squarely. He must expect others to do the same. And when he joins a club his idea must be to help keep the sport clean.

This at first seems easy, but you will find that there is often a most unhealthy undercurrent which is full of pitfalls. For want of knowledge or experience, for want of proper consideration, he may be entangled in most undesirable ways.

Bad language is one of them. It gets you nowhere. It is stupid. You may possibly fall into this objectionable habit, from sheer imitation of a perverted bounder, or from weakness because you want to impress other weaklings with your supposed manliness. It does not pay. It lowers you in the estimation of the worthwhile. It fails on the foul-mouthed, and what is more, your own conscience will sting you.

Betting is another evil. It brings in all sorts of objectionable features, and still more objectionable associations. There never was a sport yet which was not either killed or, at least, had fallen into disrepute from the evil of gambling. Unfortunately, there exists a thin end of this wedge. One class of sailing has already felt its force, and there are lamentable consequences. Further, it is against the law. But even if it were not, it would still be most pernicious. The openings for dishonesty are manifest and numerous, so I here exhort the boys to do their utmost to stamp it flat.

Another evil is imitation of some feature of other sports, which is not in accordance with our sport, and its own particular phases. It is sometimes incorporated in the rules from want of broad judgment, and against the ethics of the game as represented by the overwhelming practice of recognised authorities in the world of sailing.

Such a one is the appointment of an umpire whose decision shall be final. This is against the expressed opinion of the Yacht Racing Association, and also of the International Yacht Racing Union. It is against common-sense to give one person such power. It is manifestly unfair in the fact that there is no appeal. In our daily affairs we can appeal against any judgment in any court of law, to a higher court. We may believe our



cause justifies this and, anyhow, the case will be dealt with in a less perfunctory manner. Manifestly, it is impossible for a set of rules to cover every point that may arise. Some point may arise which is at least debatable. Why should the one considering himself aggrieved not get a hearing? It goes further; the adjudication on a certain circumstance 'clears the air', and is a precedent for the future. But for one person's opinion to be final is wrong in principle and quite un-British.

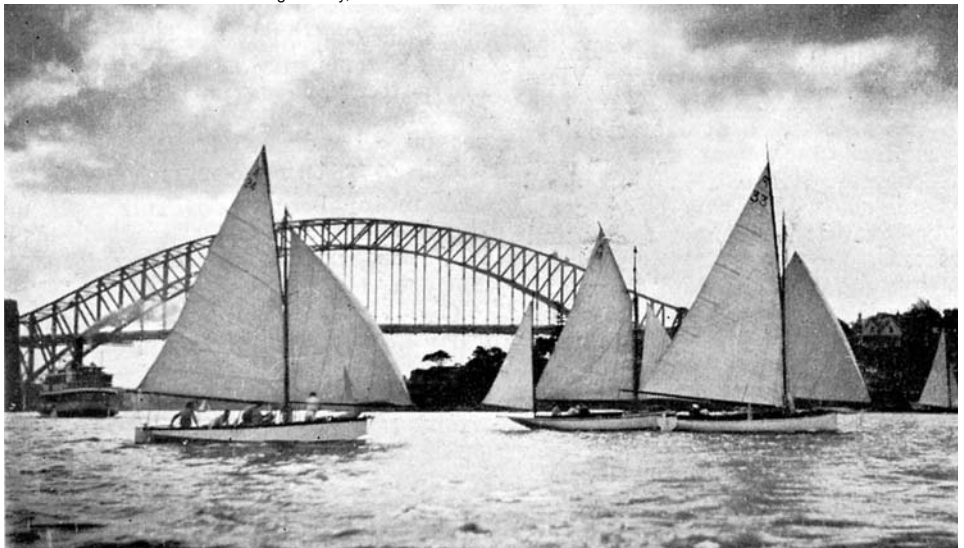
The proper procedure is for a committee to decide, after hearing evidence, carefully examining the rules applying, and give such judgment as in their collective wisdom is just, giving reasons for future reference, thereby gaining the confidence of the parties. Even then one may dissent and have the matter here brought before the Sydney Yacht Racing Association. There is still left a final appeal to the British Yacht Racing Association. All this is as it should be, and I am quite sure that no one is satisfied to have to take one person's mere opinion as being final, no matter how well versed in the rules he may be.

The worst evil, however, is the young man's inability to say a straight-out yes or no. If you know and feel a thing is 'so', stick to it with a firm 'yes', and when the reverse say 'no'. The latter especially so when it is the pernicious 'come-and-have-a-drink'. If you refuse you will be more thought of than if you accept — it proves backbone. In the latter case it is weakness, and be quite sure you will be ridiculed should you fall.

In sailing you want all your wits about you. 'When the wine is in the wit is out', is a true saying. It lowers vitality, is no good for anything. It is a silly habit, and a dangerously insidious enemy. Don't ape the man (?); be just yourself, straight and clean in your life and in your sport.

The Australian Motor Boat and Yachting Monthly, 5 Nov. 1931

SASC yachts
Sampan, *Wirraminna* and *Sea Rover* during the RSYS Opening Regatta on 24 October 1931





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